

STONE WALLS

WINTER 1979

\$1.60



When you live at the end of a dirt road which winds up a long, steep hill, a frequently asked question is, "What do you do in the winter?" After living here for three winters, I certainly am no authority, but I do have what I think is a fairly decent response. For me, wintertime extends from Christmas to the beginning of the maple syrup season which usually starts in late February or early March. Also, since I usually start the earliest flower and tomato seeds in the house in late February, by that time I am beginning to think spring, even though its actual arrival may be several months away.

So the question really becomes, "What do you do in January and February?" This is the time of short days and long winter evenings with snowstorms and below-zero temperatures. Outdoors there is always wood to cut and snow to shovel. When those chores are done, on crisp sunny days, there is time to go hiking on snowmobile trails or to explore old wood roads on skis or snowshoes. For it is the one season of the year when there is likely to be some leisure time in the country. Last year I began to work on a handspun knitted afghan which I plan to finish this winter. Throughout the hilltowns, people are engrossed in their own individual projects, for winter is a time when painters can paint, readers can read, and dreamers can dream. The long winter evenings and weather forecasts of snow and sleet provide opportunity for much worthwhile activity at home.

Another traditional winter activity is to work on one's income tax forms — to find out for sure whether there is a refund or a payment due in April. A happier winter task is to browse through seed and garden catalogues and plan the best garden ever for the coming year. The weeds and bugs of last year are forgotten in anticipation of what can be planted in the spring.

The early inhabitants of these hilltowns did not have income tax forms and garden catalogues which arrived in their mailboxes immediately following Christmas. The chores of everyday living kept them busy throughout the year, but undoubtedly they, too, took advantage of the pause between Christmas and the maple syrup season to make their quilts, repair their farm tools, and plan ahead for spring.

Lucy Conant

STONE WALLS

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Huntington, Massachusetts 01050

Vol. 4, No. 4

STONE WALLS is published quarterly. Subscriptions are \$6.00 a year, \$1.60 for individual copies. Please add 40¢ with a special request for any back issue to be mailed. The retail price of individual copies may be modified only with the permission of the Editorial Board. We welcome unsolicited manuscripts and illustrations from and about the hilltowns of the Berkshires. The editors of STONE WALLS assume no responsibility for non-commissioned manuscripts, photographs, drawings, or other material. No such material will be returned unless submitted with self addressed envelope and sufficient postage. We also welcome letters from our readers. No portions of this publication may be reproduced in any form, with the exception of brief excerpts for review purposes, without the express consent of the editors of STONE WALLS.

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Cover photos by George McNeil

Printed by The Mint Printers, Laurie Drive, Southampton, Massachusetts 01073

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The Reverend Cushing Eells

by Doris W. Hayden of Blandford

There are probably only a few of the present Blandford residents who ever heard of Cushing Eells, but he was a native of Blandford who accomplished much under very trying conditions.

His father, Joseph Eells, either bought or was farming land near the foot of Birch Hill. When I was a small girl, my father purchased that farm and he told me there was once a house at the upper end of the mowing near the junction of Birch Hill Road and Hayden Road. This is where the Eells house stood. I remember seeing a depression there when I picked wild strawberries many years ago.

Cushing Eells was the third child of Joseph and Elizabeth (Warner) Eells, born February 16, 1810, the oldest son in a family of ten. Joseph was not well-to-do and Cushing learned as he grew up how to do the chores and work in the fields. His schooling, probably at the Center School, consisted of reading, writing, and arithmetic, the usual curriculum of those days. His was a religious home and he early learned to read and rely on the Bible.

At fourteen, he was converted but did not become a church member until May 6, 1827 at the age of seventeen. Reverend Dorus Clarke was Blandford's minister at that time. He and the boy's father felt that Cushing should go to college but the father was too poor to pay much toward such education. Cushing studied with his minister for a year; later with Reverend Timothy Cooley of Granville. He then went to Monson Academy to prepare for entrance to Williams College, under Reverend Simeon Colton.

He found he might receive some financial help from the American Education Society of Boston. From Monson, he walked to Amherst and there talked with Dr. Heman Humphrey and President Edward Hitchcock. They recommended him to the Society. From then on he received twelve dollars per quarter while studying at the Academy, except for one quarter when he was teaching. After entering Williams College in 1830, this amount was increased to seventy-five dollars per quarter for which he signed notes without interest.

Williams College is some forty-five miles from Blandford. His father took him, his books, and baggage to Williamstown in a one horse wagon. However, the distance was too great for many visits home. Occasionally he was able to ride part way but many times walked the entire distance. A far cry from today's students with cars.

He was graduated from Williams College in 1834. He then entered East Windsor Theological Institute in Connecticut (now Hartford Theological Seminary). In his senior year at college he had become interested in missionary work among the Zulus in Africa. Two years later he offered himself to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and was appointed to the Zulu Mission.

On October 25, 1837, he was ordained in the White Church of Blandford as a Congregational missionary to Africa. An outbreak of war between Zulu chiefs, however, made the Mission impractical for a time and his departure was delayed. He

spent that winter teaching school.

While pursuing his education, he taught school in Holden, Massachusetts during one of his vacations. There he became acquainted with Myra, the daughter of Deacon Joshua Fairbank. In the fall of 1837, Cushing was asked by the Board if he was willing to change his sights and become a missionary in connection with Marcus Whitman in Oregon Territory. He consulted with Myra, his fiancée. She was willing and they were married March 6, 1838, in Holden. The next day they started on a three thousand mile wedding trip which did not end until April, 1839.

There were nine in the party. They coped with many hazards during the long trip; wolves, river-crossings, loss of horses, and threatening Indians, to mention a few.

Cushing's work was among the Indians to a great extent. Tshimakain, where he and those working with him were stationed, was two hundred and fifty miles deeper into the wilderness than the Whitman Mission. Two children were born to Cushing and Myra — Edwin in 1842 and Myron in 1845.

On November 29, 1847, discontent and hate among the Indians broke out and Dr. Marcus Whitman (45) and his wife, Narcissa (39) were massacred and scalped.

Marcus died while ministering to the sick. Three Indians had come to the door asking for medical help. As Whitman bent to select the proper medicine, one of the Indians killed him with a blow of his tomahawk. Because of this massacre, the political history of the Oregon Territory was affected but this need not be gone into in this article.

Cushing Eells realized that little was being done for the schooling of children in the area because there were few or none old enough to need it. However, in 1859, he anticipated future needs and obtained from the Territorial Legislature on December 30, 1859, a charter for Whitman Seminary, named in honor of his missionary colleague, Dr. Marcus Whitman.

Actual instruction began December 4, 1863 at Waulaptu. That was the first beginning of Whitman Seminary. In October 1866, Whitman Seminary began again at Walla Walla. From the dream of "Father Eells", grew what later became Whitman College in the State of Washington.

Cushing Eells received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Pacific University in 1883. He died February 16, 1893, exactly eighty years of age.

"How far that little candle throws its beams."

Sources:-

Father Eells, by Myron Eells
Whitman, an Unfinished Story, by B.L. Penrose

The Rings of Ringville

by Frank W. Bates of Huntington

This article is based on information dated 1898 in the possession of Miss Edna Witt. It chiefly concerns Mr. Elkanah Ring, then in his 90th year, who with his brother Thomas gave Ringville its name. At that time he lived on Green Avenue in Westfield with his daughter Eliza and her family, surrounded with every comfort and pleasure and without an ache or a pain. He was described as hale and hearty, retaining possession of all his faculties, a clear and thoughtful student of men and affairs, having been a great reader all of his life, and able to converse readily on all current topics. Apparently his kindly nature, combined with a large element of tolerance for the failings of others, won him many friends who also tendered him the respect due to a man who leads an active life, shirks none of its responsibilities, and gives a helping hand when needed.

Elkanah Ring was born in West Chesterfield in October, 1809, near the old Bryant place "towards the mountain". His father was also Elkanah Ring and the young man's boyhood was spent on Ireland (Highland) Street, near the John Cole place. His formal education apparently ended when he was 15, at which time he began to shift for himself, going to Savoy to work on a farm. He was three times married, his first wife being Eliza Cole of Chesterfield, daughter of Consider Cole, one of the town's best-remembered citizens. They were married in October, 1840, and she lived less than two years, leaving one son, Charles Ring, who apparently settled in Michigan. In 1843,

he married Betsy Burr, daughter of Calvin Burr of Worthington. She died in 1858, leaving a son and five daughters. The son and three of the daughters were still living in 1898. His third wife was Maria Edwards, daughter of Luther Edwards of Chesterfield and an aunt of Mrs. Frank P. Searle of Westfield. She lived until 1866 and Mr. Ring did not marry again. The Reverend J.H. Bisbee officiated at all three marriages and preached the funeral sermons for each of Mr. Ring's three wives.

The first wedding marked one of the great days in Worthington history. It took place on a Sunday in the old white church so long a landmark in Western Massachusetts, and a peculiar fact was that five couples were married at that hour. The other four were Mortimer Higgins, Carl Starkweather, Nelson Parrish, and Albert Tinker. All stood up in a row before the great high pulpit and, one after the other, the Reverend Mr. Bisbee made the couples one. The whole congregation witnessed the ceremony and when it was over the five couples took their seats and listened to the long afternoon sermon.

In 1830, Mr. Ring, then just of age, united with his brother Thomas in starting a small business in the central part of Worthington, to which came the name of Ringville. They bought an old oil mill and made many extensions, first making window curtains, then adding baby carriages and sleds until they had a large business. This continued until 1852, when the two brothers, known as E. and T. Ring, went to Knightville, in Huntington, bought an old

mill and made baby carriages, sleds, and bedsteads. The business prospered; the little hamlet grew, and was the center of activity. Henry Stinton had operated a sawmill there and this was carried on with the rest. The two Ring brothers made their homes in the neighborhood.

Mr. Ring had always been progressive and this was well-demonstrated while he was in business in Ringville. Then the only road from South Worthington to Huntington was over Goss Hill, roundabout, rough, and steep. Mr. Ring and his brother made several attempts to get a road laid out up the river, but the county commissioners refused to do it. Finally, when viewing the ground one day, the chairman, Mr. Billings, said they would lay it out if it would not cost over \$1.45 per rod. The Rings took him up on it and declared they would build it for that price, although it was ridiculously low. This was in 1843. They carried it through, losing a lot of money, but were satisfied when Mr. Billings, after going over the whole length of the road, remarked, "Ring, you have done that up to a shaving." Then the brothers tried for something more: The Western Railroad had been put through, mails came direct to Huntington, and the Rings began agitating for a mail route from Huntington to Worthington. Everyone said it would not pay, so the brothers agreed to guarantee the expense and the stages started. A man named Cooper drove first. When he died two or three years later, it was claimed that the venture had lost him (Cooper) fifteen dollars, so the Ring brothers settled this as agreed. David Sanderson took the route then, without a guarantee. The veteran, E.S. Burr, was the driver in 1898. During this time, Mr. Ring was selectman in Worthington, elected in 1850 to be member from Huntington of the

County Commissioners, serving with Hon. Elisha Brewster of Worthington and Mr. Cummings of Ware, he was succeeded by Co. E.A. Edwards of Southampton. In 1863, when the Constitutional Convention met in Boston to revise the Constitution, Mr. Ring was Huntington's representative and had a chance during the four month's session to get acquainted with such men as Choate, Wilson, and Sumner.

Mr. Ring's brother died in Huntington in 1863 and although he kept on, the long distance from the railroad, sharp competition, and other causes led to a gradual decline in the business. Mr. Ring left in 1867 to go into the lumber business in Readsboro, Vermont, remaining there for three years. He spent the year 1870 in Chester, setting up the emery mills, then removed to Westfield until in 1874 he went to Michigan, taking up a quarter section in the backwoods at Brant, near Saginaw. He remained there for seven years, during which time he was appointed deputy surveyor for Saginaw County, a position of importance. But it was uphill work to improve his land as he was more of a machinist than a farmer and he determined to return to Westfield and open a small machine shop, which he was still operating for pleasure and profit in 1898. When he first went into manufacturing, he and his brother made almost all of their own machinery and, in addition, he invented many mechanical devices of great practical utility and value, yet never cared to get them patented and the profit usually went to others.

When Mr. Ring was 22, he thought he would locate in Chicago and grow up with the place. Elijah Drury of Worthington gave him one thousand dollars in money with instructions to invest it in the new city if he deemed it best, but young Ring

saw nothing in the swamp hole to indicate the future of Chicago. He traveled there by the Erie Canal and the Lake Steamers, but walked a good deal of the way home. He carried the money in a leather girdle around his body and one morning, as he got up, the girdle slipped off and was left in the bedclothes at the hotel. It was found, a messenger sent after the traveler,

and the money restored, which in due time was put back into Mr. Drury's hands, uninvested. One year, Mr. Ring walked from Ohio to Albany, mending clocks along the way; once he walked from Troy to Worthington, in a single day; and several times from Westfield to Worthington having a delightful time visiting along the way.

NATURE'S HIDDEN VALUES by Virginia Ladd Otis of Goshen

All too often in the past, we Americans have taken nature for granted, just as we may take our families and old friends for granted because they're always there. The American Indian never took nature for granted. In answer to a request from the United States Government to buy land from the Dunwanish Tribe, Chief Seattle gave this reply: "How can you buy or sell the sky...the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. Yet we do not own the freshness of the air or the sparkle of the water. How can you buy them from us? Every part of the earth is sacred to my people. Every shiny pine needle, every shady shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people...The white man is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs."

A mystic of India noted that in a materialistic society, we treat nature like a captive in a witness box. We cross-examine her, challenge her, and minutely weigh her evidence in human scales... scales that cannot measure her hidden values. These hidden values, as the mystic implied, are spiritual.

Can we measure the impressions of a sea wind blowing across a sparkling bay, a brook singing its little song between mossy banks, a quiet pond at sunset? Can we measure the effect on our senses of the evening planet's steady glow or the dawn song of a thrush? And what of rainbows, bluebird's wings, and April flowers? Their essence may be caught to some degree in paint on canvas, in the sculptor's lines, in the grace and rhythm of the dance, in glorious music. It may shine forth in the words of beauty or truth of philosophers and poets. There are always revelations out of doors disclosing nature's inner spirit to those who have eyes to see and hearts to appreciate. But can such things be measured? Never!

This and That

by May Smith of Montgomery

Like many, I am alone long hours each day, and I seem to get to thinking about “doings” when I was a child. They were just a part of living then, but now I think of them as interesting. Possibly readers may be amused at simple things that time has changed.

Always there was the tea-pot on the back of the old kitchen stove. From time to time, someone would add a pinch or two more of the loose tea from the bag, and a little more hot water, and let it steep awhile. Then there would come a time when it was decided to empty out the leaves and make a new batch. These leaves were not always thrown out. Mama saved them to sprinkle on the carpet when she swept. They kept the dust down and were supposed to brighten the color of the carpet. Wet newspapers could be torn into bits and used in the same way. These also kept the dust down, but weren’t considered a brightener.

Papa liked preparedness. It was law to have a couple of pails of water standing by. If, for some reason, the pump didn’t work we had a little on hand to start with. Or, in case of fire — caught in the early stages, a couple of pails of water carefully thrown might help to quell it until some one could bring more. Of course, there must be wood and kindling in the wood-box ahead. Before Pa went to bed he always came out into the kitchen, knelt down by the pile of kindling, took his jack-knife from his pocket and whittled

shavings along the sides of the sticks. These shavings were left attached, and were pretty near “sure fire” if properly placed in the stove and lighted.

Mama was a hard-working woman, but had time to show consideration for all her animals and hens, her “biddies” she called them. During the winter months, she brought their grain into the kitchen, placed it on their special pan, put on a few table scraps or a little fat from cooking and put it into the oven to warm through so they would have something warm in them for the long cold nights, and she fed them early so they would have plenty of time to get it eaten before dark came. She was well rewarded though — we always had bowls of eggs in the pantry to use, and if someone stopped by that did not have hens, they left with a few eggs to “cook with”. We’ve all heard of farm women’s egg money! This wasn’t plentiful up our way, but occasionally some one did buy a dozen or two. Back then, one could pack a dozen or two into a pail of bran or clean sawdust and take them to the grocery store to swap for groceries.

Pa raised quite a lot of corn. Before there were silos, lots of the corn was stacked. We husked in the field. Later we might take stacks to the barn and we husked as needed. For a few years we had husking-bees. In the winter Pa would sack up a lot of ears and put it into the “business sleigh” to take to the East-man Mill in Littleville to be ground. Some

was ground cob and all; some we had shelled and ground for meal; some, a small amount, was ground finer for kitchen use. Cattle seemed to do well on the cob meal.

Pa always saved his own seed corn. He went through selecting many ears, ripe, and as near the perfect type as possible. A part of the husks were left on the ears and many were braided together and hung on the porch or in the house to be kept dry. One chamber over in Gramp's house was known as the corn room (what are bedrooms now seemed to be chambers then). Toward spring he would take the ears from the braids and place them in rows on the floor. Then he fixed strips of old sheets about a foot wide and three feet or so long. He marked circles on them like from one to fifty or more for corresponding ears that lay on the floor. Then, with the point of his knife, he removed about five kernels from different places on the ear, and placed them on the numbered circles. These were carefully rolled, moistened, and placed in a flat dish and kept in a moderately warm place. On top of the heat-oven was a good place at home. They had to be watched and moistened from time to time. In about five days he unrolled these "corn dollies" as we called them, and examined them for

sprouts. This was something we were all interested in. If, for instance, ear number seven or twenty-nine didn't show good strong sprouts it was removed from the row of ears. When commercial seed-growers test their seed for germination, it must be different from this, but when you buy a packet of seed, and see stamped: GERMINATION 87% JANUARY 1979, just think back to this old system.

At the time of the first World War people were uneasy about food, and pa sowed some wheat — just in case, he said. In this area, the raising of wheat was not common, but pa had old Mr. Lambson come with his grain cradle, and I can remember well how the field looked with the sheaves stacked maybe three or five together to dry and be put onto the barn floor for threshing. The Lymans came from Chester Hill with the threshing machine, but Mr. Lambson also came and threshed with the flail by hand. Fortunately the war ended and we did not have to have this grain for ourselves, but as I look back it was a nice experience to remember.

There are many more interesting things I could write about but this is more than enough for now!



Drawing by Natalie Birrell

The Remarkable Ladies of Granville

by Barbara Brainerd of Westfield

Just about every New England town or village has, as part of its community service, a public library. Most of us simply take this for granted. How often do we stop to think about how the library came into existence, who donated the money to pay for it, or what circumstances prompted the venture? A bit of research into the history of the library in Granville, Massachusetts, reveals some very unexpected information. Would you believe that this library is the result of a group of hard-working, ingenious, and determined WOMEN? Furthermore, these women performed this mammoth task back at the turn of the century, a period of time when the female of the species was anything but liberated!

It all started on February 11, 1896, at the home of Mrs. R.B. Cooley where twelve women met and organized the Granville Library Club. Their purpose was to erect a building containing a library, a reading room, and a room for social purposes. Although the town of Granville had, prior to this time, been the home of three so-called "Social Libraries", these were private corporations, and only members who owned shares were privileged to borrow books. A member of a Social Library was fined if he were caught lending a book to a non-member! No wonder the ladies felt the need for a more democratic method of circulating reading material!

The first and foremost chore of the newly formed Library Club was to raise funds. The easy way to do this would have been for the ladies simply to ask their husbands for money. But these were independent women. The club members went about earning the necessary funds the hard way; they utilized their own particular skills or, in many cases, plunged into back-breaking labor. A list of some of the amazing tasks undertaken by these women is as follows:

Planting turnips, making pop-corn balls, making ice cream to order, picking strawberries, laundering fine lace curtains, painting china to order, making carpenters' aprons, doing housework for a neighbor.

Some of the ladies who ordinarily were able to afford sending their laundry out, instead did it themselves and saved the money they would have used to pay for it. And of course, there was always the old Yankee method of "doing without", by which a few extra pennies could be set aside now and again. At the end of three years the group had accumulated the grand sum of three thousand dollars.

Mr. Milton B. Whitney of Westfield, a native of Granville, now offered five thousand dollars towards the library, provided that the town would furnish a matching amount. The Library Club needed two thousand dollars more. The

ladies eked out a few more dollars by means of a private subscription, but they were still far below the necessary figure. Just when it appeared that the task was insurmountable, a rescuer appeared in the person of Mr. Francis B. Cooley of Hartford. Like Mr. Whitney, he was a native of Granville, and he generously contributed thirteen hundred dollars, bringing the total figure well over the five thousand dollars needed to match Mr. Whitney's offer.

The Granville Library was now to become a reality. Since supervising construction of a building was simply out of the question for women at that time, Mr. R.B. Cooley, the husband of the president of the Library Club, dealt with the architect and contractors, seeing to it that the intentions of the ladies were carried out as accurately as possible. In 1900 the present building of buff brick with brown stone trimmings was erected on a fountain of field-stone. The building was formally presented to the Town of Granville. The ladies had successfully reached their goal.

However, the Library Club did not cease its labors. Over the years the group continued to provide magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias, and volumes of general interest to stock the shelves. The original intention of the Club to have the library serve also as a center for social functions has been carried out. The two rooms and the kitchen in the basement still serve the community today as a place for meetings and gatherings of various groups. In 1968 the small room originally known as the reading room was converted into a children's library; low shelves were built, suitable furniture was bought, and wall to wall carpeting was installed.

For the visitor to the town of Granville, probably the most interesting part of the library is the Mabel Root Henry Historical Museum. This is located on the main

floor in the room which was originally designed to serve for social functions. In 1945 Mr. William Bailey of Hartford established a fund of one thousand dollars in memory of his mother, stating that the money was to be used for historical purposes. The Library Club wisely concluded that the social room would be converted to a small museum. The grand opening of the Historical Room, as it was then known, coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the Granville Library and was part of a gala celebration. Japanese lanterns were hung. Library Club members, dressed in turn-of-the-century costumes served as hostesses. Refreshments were served, and in the evening there was dancing on the lawn.

It was two years later, in 1952, that the museum received its present name in honor of another Granville woman. The Library's first librarian, who had served the town for fifty-two years, retired, and it was thought fitting to name this important part of the building after her. Thus it was christened the Mabel Root Henry Historical Museum, a tribute to a devoted and loyal lady.

This museum is open on Wednesday and Saturday from April until November and at other times by appointment. In it may be found old manuscripts and deeds as well as a collection of toys, drums, dolls, china, glass, aprons, clothes, quilts, and baby dresses. There are also scrap-books started in 1900, containing pictures and newspaper articles about townspeople and town activities, early church records, family picture albums, local genealogies, histories of surrounding towns, and volumes containing records of war veterans. The townspeople have been very generous in sharing their family treasures, and many valuable items have been donated, while others are on loan. Presiding over this collection is the curator, Mrs. Helena Duris, still another of the

remarkable ladies of Granville. Besides being a devoted caretaker of the priceless artifacts entrusted to her, Mrs. Duris is a veritable goldmine of historical data concerning the history of Granville. The visitor who asks questions about any of the exhibits can be sure that the answers he receives will be complete and accurate, for Helena Duris has the mind of a true historian, with meticulous accuracy as to details and dates. We at *Stone Walls* are grateful

that she also finds time to serve on our staff and is a frequent contributor of historical material to our pages.

The next time you drive through the town of Granville, look closely at the library and remember that it is there because of the labors of a group of remarkable women. Or better yet, stop in and look around. You may even get to chat with the curator of the museum.

ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF GRANVILLE'S LIBRARY CLUB

Mrs. Ralph B. Cooley, *President*
Miss Nellie C. Noble, *Vice President*
Miss Cora A. Noble, *Sec. and Treas.*
Mrs. Silas B. Root
Miss Clara Wilcox
Mrs. Orville R. Noble

Mrs. Mary Gill
Mrs. Emma Barlow
Mrs. Milo Seymour
Mrs. E.N. Henry
Mrs. Nell Gibbons
Mrs. Alice Carpenter

Mrs. Cattie Huddleston



Public Library, Granville, Mass.

Cold

by Alice Britton of Russell

COLD

COLD

COLD

*Clear moonlight night
Trees silhouetted all around,
Mountain against the sky.*

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

*My footsteps on the road
In the snow
As I hurry on my way
Alone.*



Drawing by Tom Jay

The Hennessy - Cognac American Ski Marathon

by George McNeil of Worthington

Since I began cross country skiing three years ago, its popularity among Americans has increased dramatically. Who will ever forget Bill Koch of Vermont and his performance in the 1976 Olympics? The surge of popularity has resulted in better equipment, new ski touring centers, and an increase of skiers like myself wanting to compete actively in ski races.

Last February the United States Ski Association along with the Hennessy Cognac sponsored a 60 kilometer cross country ski marathon through the spectacular Green Mountains of Vermont. Designated the "Hennessy Cognac American Ski Marathon", the race started at South Lincoln and ended near the Otter Valley Union High School in Brandon, headquarters for the event.

I arrived at the school at 5:30 AM in order to board a bus that would take all skiers to the starting line. The halls of the school were jammed with hundreds of anxious people vigorously preparing for the race by checking equipment and planning strategy. I sat down on the floor and marveled at all the varieties of skiers and equipment. Some owned simple wooden skis and bamboo poles while others paraded around in colorful racing suits toting high priced fiberglass skis and carbon fiber poles. Excitement filled the air.

At 6:45 AM a caravan of 22 busses left the school for the starting line some 60

kilometers away. During the hour long ride I tried to relax as much as possible but kept wondering if I could really ski 60 kilometers.

After arriving at the starting line in South Lincoln, I gulped down a cup of tea and waxed my skis. At 8:45 a loud-speaker announced there were 15 minutes till race time. I quickly put on my skis and tested them to make sure I had applied the correct combination of waxes. Satisfied, I felt ready to tackle the longest single-day ski race in the United States. With five minutes to go I got into position. I was almost in the back row, but I didn't mind since all I wanted to do was finish the distance.

The starting gun went off almost precisely at 9:00 AM. There was a mass movement of nearly 1,000 skiers funneling from a large open field up to a narrow mountain road. Movement was slow at first but picked up after a few kilometers. The first part of the race was a gradual uphill leading to a feeding station where slices of orange were handed out as you skied by.

At the 9 kilometer mark the first real problem of the race developed. The trail took a sharp left hand turn down an extremely steep hill. Race officials were letting down only one skier at a time due to its dangerous nature. From where I stood I could see some skiers falling badly,



U.S.S.A. Photo

breaking poles and skis. The delay, lasting 20 minutes, resulted in many complaints from restless skiers. The biggest problem in stopping, after having skied for awhile is that you get cold because your body begins to cool rapidly.

I fell once as I finally skied down the hill and continued on to a feeding station at the 14 kilometer mark. The next 7 kilometers were generally rolling with an enjoyable downhill run into the Middlebury Gap. As I approached the checkpoint spectators began cheering me on. I had planned this to be one of my major stops.

The site was lined with long tables of waxes and refreshments. I spoke with other skiers about the race and ate some delicious cheese and chocolate. It is important in a race of such length to replace fluids your body has used up.

By this time, 11:40, the sky had clouded over and snow flurries had started to fall. I skied on. The next 10 kilometers were mostly uphill. The flurries had increased in tempo and I was beginning to worry that the trail might become very slow. As I passed the 30 kilometer mark I heard a cheer from a skier glad to be at the half-way point. At the 34 kilometer mark I encountered an ill skier suffering from exhaustion and shaking violently. At two kilometers further and another ill skier, I soberly realized then how demanding a race of this length could be. A little while later, the flurries stopped and the sun re-appeared. As I approached the next checkpoint, the Blueberry Hill Farm in Goshen, I wondered about the time.

Race organizers had set times at each checkpoint as to when it would close. If

a skier did not reach that point in time, he was not allowed to continue the race.

The closing time at my current checkpoint was 2:30 PM. The trail split in two, one side for those continuing the race and the other for those dropping out. As I stopped for a rest I was told it was 2:00 PM and then was questioned about my physical condition. I said I felt fantastic and then asked for some refreshments. The food here was so good it was difficult to continue skiing. After consuming cookies, cheese, and four cups of hot maple syrup with lemon, I decided to resume skiing since I had little time to reach the next checkpoint. A skier next to me felt there wasn't enough time so I informed him that race officials extended the cut-off time due to the long delay early in the race. He decided to ski on.

As I took off again, I realized that I had better ski as fast as I could if I were to make it. Fortunately, the trail followed a stream downhill for almost its entire length. It was at this point in the race when I passed and was passed by a few skiers. Much of the time I was all alone silently gliding through the Vermont woods. As I reached the last checkpoint before the finish, I was told I had made it by three minutes. Relieved, I stopped and had some chocolate and congratulated other skiers who had made it to the stage in the race. As I rewaxed my skis for the final 9 kilometers, the cut-off time expired and oncoming skiers were sympathetically told they could not continue.

The last leg of the race began with a very steep climb that I felt would never end. At the top I had a drink of water and trudged on expecting an enjoyable glide to the finish. I was rudely awakened when

the trail began to wind steeply downhill. I fell once, fell again to avoid hitting a fallen skier, and then fell a third time after being told by a race official I had negotiated the worst of the hill. My entire body was whitened with snow as the trail flattened out. And suddenly I saw the finish line. As I crossed it, I was congratulated, and a gold medal was hung around my neck. There were no crowds to greet me since most of the big name racers had finished hours earlier. Satisfied that I finished the marathon, I shed my skis and walked to my car with a big grin on my face.

The winner's time was roughly 3 hours 48 minutes, one half the amount it took me. Of the 967 skiers who participated, 450 earned the gold medal for completing the full 60 kilometers. Skiers completing 20 kilometers received bronze medals and those completing 40 kilometers earned the silver medal.

For me, the most appealing aspect of the marathon was the challenge of skiing 60 kilometers. Even though there were hundreds of other skiers, I was still skiing by myself. Mental attitude was crucial. Twice during the race the pain in my body became almost unbearable. My legs would cramp up and my feet would lose circulation. I wanted to stop but realized that if I were to finish, I had to ignore the pain and keep going. For a couple of days after the race I felt as if I were still skiing. Even though I experienced some difficulty, in no way was the enjoyment of the Marathon diminished. Therefore, this winter I'm accepting the challenge again and am hoping to improve my performance considerably.

Cutting Ice

by Brooke Lynes
of Cummington

Hot, humid, oppressive and thunderstorms threatening. That's what it is often like when it's haying season and the little pond at the end of the field looks so inviting. I asked Fran Wells if they had used it for a "swimmin' hole" as kids.

"Yes, some. But my father generally said we could go in after the next round. We mostly used that pond for ice."

"Oh."

When the truck was piled high as possible with bales, he said to take the load to the old ice house as the barn was pretty full. When we had stuffed the ice house with the hay, and were catching our breaths I asked Franny which was harder work: getting in hay or ice?

He thought for a long moment and then said, "Well, you didn't get a break when you were cutting ice because if you stopped to rest, your saw would likely freeze in and it was an awful job chopping it out. You only did that a couple of times. It

was really a question of working so hard that you dripped with sweat or of freezing your backside off.

"We cut blocks 18" by 18". They weighed about 100 pounds on the average. If it was a warm winter we might cut them 12" by 18". I still have the saw right there in the barn. It weighed about 20 or 25 pounds and cut on the down stroke. We usually cut once and then again. Late December and January were the best times. If we cut later the sun would be higher and the rays would crystalize the ice. We didn't want that because then the blocks would disintegrate when we picked them up, so we would have to cover the blocks with snow. If we had a thaw it was an awful nuisance because there would be two or three inches of water on top of the ice. If you slipped and fell you would get terribly cold.

"We hauled about two dozen blocks at a time from the pond to the ice house on



wood-shod sleds with teams of horses. We modified the wood carrying sleds with little rails so that it was right for the ice and the blocks wouldn't slip off. Then we would pack it in the ice house between layers of dry sawdust which we got from the local portable saw-mills. It was a kid's job in summer to haul the used wet sawdust to the barn for cow bedding. The ice would last most of the summer, although it seemed as if the ice house never held quite enough and sometimes we would run out. Then we had to go to some place where they made ice. Franklyn Streeter, who hauled milk, would bring it out for us. He got it from the Norwood Ice Company's huge ice house in Easthampton. They are now the Norwood Oil Company."

"It seems to me, Franny, that you must have been awfully glad when electric refrigerators were invented."

"Oh, my, yes!" said he.

I was standing there remembering how

the cold wet sawdust used to smell and how pleasant it was in an ice-house on a hot summer day. We didn't know as children that ice-houses were fire hazards. Fran says there were a good many ice-house fires from spontaneous combustion of wet sawdust or straw.

I remembered the good things we used the ice for like eating ice chips, cold summer drinks, and home-made ice cream unlike any I've had for years. I remembered that some of my forebears had cut ice and shipped it in the holds of China-bound clipper ships.

Franny broke into my reverie: "We used it to keep the milk cold." (I had not thought that Franny's farm was then a dairy farm.) "My father had quite a nice little ice business, too. We used to fill two or three other ice-houses besides our own."

I said it sounded as though his father did the business and Franny did the ice.

"Well, yes, that was so."

Unfortunately the house, barn, old tools and furnishings burned just before Thanksgiving. While these buildings were a total loss, the ice house remains standing.



Do You Have a Babbitt Axe ?

by Bernard Drew of Housatonic

If you have an old axe in your shed or cellar that is inscribed with the Babbitt name, the Windsor Historical Commission would like to see it — it's extremely rare.

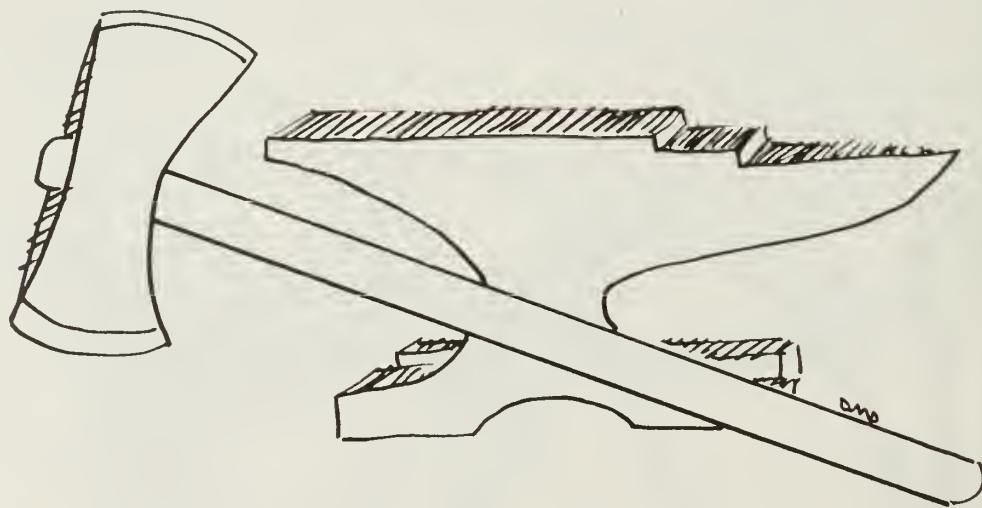
Andrew Jackson Babbitt (1816-1885), the son of Edward and Abigail (Newcomb) Babbitt of Savoy, launched an axe and edge tool factory in the vicinity of River Road near the Windsor State Forest in about 1852. Beginning his business with \$2,000 capital, on land purchased from his wife's relatives, the blacksmith apparently turned out a quality product. "As a manufacturer of axes," said the Beers 1885 *History of Berkshire County*, "he was as widely known and as sharp as his well-known and well used 'Babbitt Ax.'"

"The Babbitt family," said William B. Browne in the North Adams *Transcript* in 1938, "was noted for its iron and metal workers in the Old Colony. Isaac Babbitt invented the Babbitt metal and Andrew

Babbitt of Savoy (and Windsor) who made famous axes followed the family tradition."

The factory was successful enough that a "village" of two or three houses sprang up nearby. Little is known about the plant's operation, other than that it was powered by water. Babbitt, who married Louisa A. Frink of Windsor, was elected representative of the 4th district (which included Windsor) to the Boston legislature in 1860. He was assistant assessor of internal revenue for six years, during which time he relinquished operation of the edge tool business to William Reed. Reed later employed three men and turned out 25 axes a day.

Today the only signs of the factory (the land is on Notchview Reservation) are miscellaneous stone walls and an eight mile long sluiceway overgrown with trees.



Three Poems

by Vincent Bisaillon

of Southampton

THE SCARF

*Before we said goodnight,
We warmed my scarf between us,
And it stole your scent.
I took your scent
And wrapped it carefully
Around my neck.
I carried you
Along with me
Into the night
Down the dark river of highway.
That separates me
From you and emptiness.
The scarf,
I put under my pillow,
And in the morning
It was entwined in my hands.*

TIME TENDS HOPE

*What can I say to you, my child,
That my tears have not taught.
The lines in my eyes are
As deep as my regret.
Time tends hope
That broken dreams
Will mend.*

THURSDAY NIGHT

*Thursday night as the sun set,
Sarah climbed down from the apple tree.
The flower petals rained down upon the grass
Like the tears in my heart
Since we have parted.
Spring is a child of Winter.*

HOT DRINKS FOR THE FEVERED, CHILLED, AND COLD
for Wet Feet, Chattering Teeth,
Cold Spines, Shivers, Goose-Flesh,
Frozen Fingers, and Chillblains.

Drawing by Donna Drew

HOT BUTTERED CRANBERRY DRINK

- 1 quart cranberry juice
- 2 cups water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 6 whole cloves
- 6 whole allspice
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- $\frac{1}{2}$ sliced lemon

Combine juice, water, sugar and butter in a heavy 3 quart pan. Stir until sugar is dissolved, then add spices and lemon and bring to a boil. Continue to cook 10 minutes at low heat. Strain and serve in heated mugs.

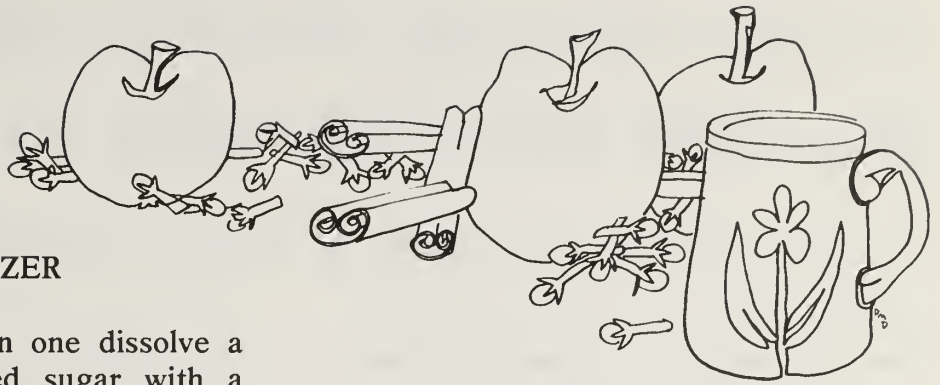


SHAKER MULLED CIDER from Amelias' Shaker Recipes

- 3 quarts cider
- 1 teaspoon whole cloves (heads removed)
- 1 whole nutmeg
- 1 stick cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

Put all ingredients in enameled pot and simmer for five minutes. Strain and serve very hot in warmed noggins (goblets). Serves 20.

Shaker cider was made from perfect fall apples. The apples were prepared as follows: "Place them on the grass on the north or shady side of the grain barn to mellow. When at thirty feet distance you can catch the fragrant apple aroma, they are ready for the press." Crushing the fruit in a cider press produced juice which was then strained and piped into barrels to be aged.



BLUE BLAZER

Use two glass mugs. In one dissolve a teaspoonful of powdered sugar with a wine-glass of boiling water. Pour in one wine-glass of Scotch whiskey. Ignite the liquid with fire, and while blazing mix the ingredients by pouring from one mug to the other, four or five times. If expertly done it will have the appearance of a continued stream of fire, but the novice should be careful not to scald himself. Serve piping hot in a small glass with a piece of twisted lemon peel.

MULLED CRANBERRY PUNCH

- 8 cups cranberry juice cocktail
- 4 cups apple juice
- 4 cups orange juice
- 1 cup maple syrup
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp. ground cloves

Combine all ingredients; heat just to boiling point. Pour into mugs and serve hot.

HOT CRAN-ORANGE PUNCH

- 4 cups cranberry juice cocktail
- 2 cups strong tea
- 2 cups orange juice
- 2 cups ginger ale
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 12 whole cloves

Combine all ingredients and bring to a boil. Simmer for five minutes. Remove spices and serve in large mugs.

HOT BUTTERED RUM

In a heated bar glass pour one wine-glass of Jamaica rum. Add a teaspoonful of powdered sugar and a small piece of butter, big as the end of your fingernail. Fill with boiling water, stirring as you pour. Grate a little nutmeg on top (or use a stick of cinnamon as a swizzle stick) and serve.

CRANBERRY GRAPEFRUIT GROG

- 4 cups cranberry juice cocktail
- 2 cups unsweetened grapefruit juice
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 cups orange juice
- ½ tsp. allspice

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan. Bring to the boiling point. Pour into mugs. Garnish with apple slices.

MULLED WINE

Into a pot of boiling water put a suitable quantity of cloves, cinnamon, and grated nutmeg. When the flavor becomes pungent to the nostrils pour in an equal amount of Muscatel wine in which a few teaspoonfuls of sugar have been dissolved. Bring the whole to the boiling point, and serve piping hot with crisp dry toast. Mulled wine can also be made with Port, Claret, or Madeira.

Life Flowed Slowly Down by the Old Mill Stream or Did It?

by Edward E. Bradley of Wakefield, Rhode Island

(Excerpts from this diary will be found following this article)

Back in 1827, one of my great-great-grandfathers ran a powder mill near Russell, Massachusetts and kept a daily account of his activities and the weather. At first glance, it seems he did very little in the course of a day. But notice: he was the foreman, the stock and inventory clerk, production scheduler, and when "it rained in the afternoon so as to raise the stream" he was the hydraulic engineer. His mentions of the weather take on a more important role since the stream was the source of the mill's power and it was at the mercy of the weather. Further on he states that he "headed up powder cegs" thus placing himself in the Shipping Department preparing merchandise for transport. He then "fixed the coal mortar (Maintenance Department) and delivered twenty-eight casks (Teamster and Billing Clerk). He must have welcomed Sundays! Of course the mill did not operate on the Sabbath Day and he usually notes whether or not he attended "meeting". One day he caught 178 fish in the "coarse of half an hour".

One day it rained so hard that the mill would not run, so he went to a farmer friend's place and helped him get out manure and make fencing. Otherwise, the operation of the mill continued uneventfully for the whole month of May, 1827, until the thirtieth when he, "Went to

Mr. Hayden's house and played ball". Next day he went to Chester and played ball. That was before the designation of Memorial (or Decoration) Day, but it might have been a Militia Training Day.

As the summer commenced, he continued to operate the mill in all its phases of activity, taking time one day to go and pick strawberries. The dam had to be repeatedly corked until July when the stream fell so low that it would not run. Did Vestus run to the Unemployment Office to collect his benefits? Did he set up headquarters in the hammock and doze the days away? Did he round up his friends and get another ball game going? Not in 1827 he didn't. He went instead to "gravelling the dam". As a seasoned New Englander he knew that wet weather would be along one of those days, and it behooved him to take advantage of the low water to shore up points that needed it. It's a good thing he did so, for before the week was out it rained very hard — and the dam held! He must have taken a good deal of pride in his work — as I do just reading about it.

With August came excessive heat. Vestus took the third day off and went to town to see the circus riders. In those days, circuses consisted mostly of displays of Noah's Ark animals and a dozen or so exhibitions of horseback riding with a few gymnasts and clowns for good measure. I wonder what they ate at those affairs. Probably corn on the cob and fried chicken

and pies and cakes and melons and hay-maker's switchel and . . . and . . .

By the end of August the stream was so high that the mill would not run again. Feast or famine; flood or drought; that was the way of it, let no-one doubt. During September he continued working on the dam, placing down rafters whenever the opportunity offered. Meantime, he worked the mill busily, dried and sorted powder, burnt coal, pounded sifted coal and brimstone, packed powder. He says on the eighth that the weather was hotter. With all that work, I'll just bet it was! Then came signs of rain. He spent the next week preparing the dam for a storm, but to no avail. It broke through the bottom on the 14th, so the next day he put down some spoil plank and raised the pond. Over the following Sunday, the "water worked the gravel out from under the dam so the whole stream ran underneath!" Were there excuses in the text? Did he say it wasn't his fault? Blame the Weather? Not a word of it. He says the weather was "Warm and pleasant". Next day he corked the dam. It rained again — and again, harder. He says the "water rose very high". On the 20th (near the date of our great hurricane of 1938) he worked trying to save the trunk and other things from "going off in the flood". It wasn't until the 25th that he was able to restore them to their rightful places, and then he had to take a day off to go to Russell, training. (Rueben Bradley was Captain of the Militia in 1825.) You see, Vestus didn't call his insurance man; nor did he write to Washington to demand government intervention. It was a bit of a disaster for him — but all that meant was a little harder work and probably some longer hours. At any rate, he handled the whole thing and still fulfilled his military obligation.

With November came the cold weather, and on the 6th and 7th there was a snowfall of fifteen inches. Since that ended the operation of the mill for awhile, he spent his time that winter in the following operations:

getting wood, going a hunting; he shot "squerrils", turkeys, foxes, wildcats; he lathed some, put up fences, drew wood, bound up some rye to neighbors, went to a bee, helped kill hogs, loaded wood, plastered some, tended sawmill, sold wood in Westfield, went to a spell, fetched a school teacher, fixed a table in the tan house, covered the vats, soled his shoes, went to meeting with the sled, went and got ten bushels of coal, went after hay, pulled down the cider mill, sharpened his ax, split rails, took them to Westfield and sold them, made pickets and sold them, soled his boots, broke flax, tracked wildcats, worked on the dam, made a basket, sowed clover, fixed the cart, helped a neighbor get logs over the falls, and finally on March 31, 1828, took the stage to Lee where he was to work for Moses Hoyt in his powder mill.

I think it might be prudent for us all to take another look at those country schools. In those days groups of children met in the larger homes and were taught Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic until the weather moderated to the point where they were needed to do farm work. We need not feel superior because their school year was less than 180 days — nor envious either for that matter. The daily skills that they were taught are now being offered in many of our institutions of higher learning under the heading of "Cultural Crafts". Even their style of handwriting is being taught at Historical Societies. We

are learning again to grow and use herbs and natural food, and are beginning to turn away from medicine for cures and restore proper nutrition to its rightful place as preventative of illness. To be sure, we are grateful for our physicians, nurses, hospitals, antibiotics, immunizing shots and the rest. But we have a new respect for the wisdom of our ancestors, coping so well with so little.

The operation of the powder mill in Lee continued through the month of April, 1828. On the 26th, the entry reads:

“Saturday morning about 3 o’clock the mills corning works and hot house blew up. They caught fire from the coal mill which caught fire in the night from the coal. Washed up in the forenoon and started for home in the afternoon. Went to Asher Wright’s and stayed all night. Cloudy.”

and on the 28th:

“Went to Andrew Mallory’s mill. Warm. I was very unwell.”

He was a master of understatement. When we visited Lee to leave a copy of Grandfather Vestus’s Diary there, the Librarian showed us a copy of *The Centennial History of Lee* by the Reverend C.M. Hyde, D.D. and Alexander Hyde, published Springfield, 1878. There are accounts of several powder mill explosions in the early 1800’s in which each time several young men were killed, until the townspeople protested. However, even as late as May 1828, the mill was rebuilt and Vestus was right in there helping. After all, Lee powder was of fine quality and was much sought after and OSHA had not yet been thought of.

Vestus continued to work in the powder mill that summer till August. On the 8th he says he, “Finished work in the mill on account of stock.” Next day he moved sixty-one kegs of powder from the hot

house to the stove house and on the 10th he “Went home to Russell.” We were all relieved to read this, and can well imagine his family must have felt the same. However, the lumbering business was more hazardous than milling had been, and he was hurt by having a tree fall on him. He returned to Lee and the mill in October and November, then settled with Hoyt and Ingersol and went home again to Russell.

The winter was spent much as the previous one had been except that he attended a ball given at New Year’s by Thomas Loomis. On February 20th, 1829 he was given a puppy by Warren Parks. (Looking ahead a few years, Vestus had married his sweetheart, Hannah Gowdy. When their second child was born February 13, 1835, he was named Warren Parks).

On the 17th of March, Vestus went to Titus Doolittle’s after hay. That was in 1829. One hundred and forty-eight years later plus a month, I had a letter from Mrs. Louise Mason, Librarian at Russell, who lives on the old hill farm once owned by the same Titus Doolittle. Talk about telescoping history! The past and present join through these pages. Titus Doolittle’s daughter Elizabeth married my great-great-great grandfather, Abraham Bradley.

Getting back to circuses, briefly. These country circuses and fairs were also a drawing card for all the peddlers in the vicinity. They came in with their wares of tinware, hats, cotton goods, shoes, buttons, clocks, what-have-you. Some were budding business men, starting out with small capital investment to see if they liked the life. Others were young scamps, driving hard bargains for shoddy merchandise and quickly vanishing from the scene. But they had one trait in common, and that was the capacity to have a good time and to

draw people into their fun. It seems likely that Vestus would remember those spirited times during the long hours of dangerous work he was to put in during the next couple of years, and eventually, in March of 1829, he notes that on the 27th he went to Westfield and agreed to peddle for Russel Treadway for \$15.00 a month. He bought a horse and a wagon from neighbors, spent a couple of weeks mending harness, and so on, and then on the 13th loaded up his tin and set out on a series of five trips which took him around the villages and towns of central Massachusetts, down into Connecticut where he took time to visit the old copper mine at Newgate Prison where Tories had been imprisoned during the Revolution. He wandered northward into Vermont and New York State as well as New Hampshire. While he obviously enjoyed traveling and meeting hospitable inn keepers as well as other peddlers like himself, he usually notes that trade was rather dull. A couple of times he mentions being "unwell" whether due to questionable food in various establishments or just to natural indisposition he doesn't clarify. If some of the peddlers drove hard bargains, I'll just bet there were a certain number of innkeepers who were not above serving sour bread and greasy victuals to travelers who perhaps would not be under

their roofs very long.

He continued to note the weather, and on May 9th says that he saw considerable snow in drifts by the road between Worthington and Cummington. On the 12th he passed a snow drift about eight feet deep in places in the west part of Plainfield and it froze very hard at night. Not any weather to set out the early vegetable plants, was it?

Vestus met some engaging people on his travels, however, and they had some good times, gathering together at certain favorite places for dancing and revelry. He met others who shared with him meetings of the Shakers in South Lee. He had friends there from his days of working in the powder mill, and of course looked them up when he passed through.

All in all, it was a time of travelling about the country, making new friends, observing various styles of living and various types of homes. He was much better qualified for whatever he turned to in later years after this season of selling. Whatever that might have been, we do not know, for this is the end of the diary. We next hear of him in 1831 when he and Hannah Gowdy were married and began their family. Knowing that his daughter married Almeenus Bradley gives us a delicious sense of knowing more about his life than he did when he wrote it.

An 1855 map shows V. PARKS living above Woronoco across Great Brook, about half way between where the brook draining Hazard Pond (Lake Woronoke-Russell Pond) joins Great Brook and Where Great Brook enters the Westfield River at Woronoco. His mill was probably on Great Brook which parallels Route 23 and caused such destruction to that road in the 1955 flood.

Excerpts from the Diary of Vestus Parks

MAY, 1827

1. *Charged the mill for the first time. 12 casks.*
2. *Charged second time.*
3. *Charged third time and dried powder.*
5. *Charged the mill fourth time and sorted powder. Warm and pleasant.*
6. *Sunday. Went to Russell to meeting. Very warm.*
7. *Run the mill, sorted powder and powdered coal. Rainy with south wind.*
10. *Charged the mill and packed powder. Very warm in the forenoon and pleasant. Rained in the afternoon so as to raise the stream.*
11. *Run the mill and headed powder cegs. Cool and cloudy with some wind.*
13. *Sunday. Very clear and pleasant. Stayed at the mill till afternoon, then went to Mr. Johnson's.*
14. *Run the mill and dried, sorted powder. Very pleasant and warm. Some frost in morning.*
16. *Cleaned the mill. Fixed coal mortar.*
17. *Dried and packed powder. Very warm. Delivered R. Whitney 2 casks p.*
18. *Charged the mill, dried powder. Warm and pleasant. Caught 178 fish in the course of half an hour. Washed up and went into town after lime.*
20. *Sunday. Went to meeting on Russell mountain. Cool.*
21. *Run the mill, sorted and packed powder and delivered Almon Gillet 26 casks of powder (26 + 2 delivered).*
22. *Went to Southwick to work for Ephraim Booth making fence, getting out manure. Rained very hard in the afternoon and night so as to raise the stream so the mill would scarcely run.*

JULY, 1827

16. *Charged the mill. Very warm and the water very low so that the mill would not run in the afternoon.*
17. *Run the mill about two hours in the morning. The water fell so it would run no longer. Dried, sorted and packed powder. Warm and pleasant. Washed up and went to Russell at night.*
18. *Worked the dam in the forenoon and got the water up so as to corn a little, in the afternoon went to corning. Tracy went to Southwick in the afternoon. Cooler.*
21. *Run the mill, pounded and sifted coal. The dam leaked so that the corning works would not run. Cooler with some wind. Washed up and went home.*
23. *Worked for Ager Weller raking and binding rye in the forenoon. Went to graveling the dam in the afternoon with Mr. Booth. Cooler. Mr. Booth went home. Tracy worked for Bush.*
25. *Worked in the glaze, dried powder. Cooler with some clouds. Tracy sick.*
29. *Sunday. Went a-whortleberrying in the forenoon. Went across the river in the afternoon to Roland Parke's and turned over the canoe. Got wet.*

AUGUST, 1827

3. *Charged the mill, dried powder. The water rose considerable. Very warm and pleasant. Washed up and went to town in the evening to see the circus riders.*
5. *Sunday. Was at home. Picked whortleberries. With circus came extreme heat.*
8. *Bolted, and carried up the powder. Stripped one press, corned some heddings in the forenoon. Worked setting timer in the afternoon for the dam and run the mill. The water was so low that I could not corn.*
20. *Laid and stripped one press. Sorted and packed powder. Warm and pleasant. Daniel Tuttle died 11 o'clock.*
21. *Tuesday morning was at home. Went to Westfield to see the shows. . . One lion, two tigers, one coon, one ichneumen, five monkies, and went to exhibition with Amanda Parke and Hannah Gowdy. Warm and pleasant.*

SEPTEMBER, 1827

17. *Burned coal, piled up coal wood. The water had worked the gravel out from under the dam so the whole stream run underneath. Warm and pleasant.*
18. *Worked corking the dam. Rained in the afternoon. Cloudy in the forenoon.*
19. *Worked in the corning works. Rained very hard all day. The water rose very high.*
20. *Worked trying to save the trunk and other things from going off in the flood in the forenoon. Washed up and went to town in the afternoon. Rained all day.*
21. *Filled the coal pot with alderwood for cylinder powder, burned coal, chopped wood and rest part of the day. Rained some. Cloudy all day. The trunk went off the 20: :1827.*
22. *Chopped wood in the forenoon. Put up some powder in the afternoon and picked some stuff out of the floom. Bot up the waste gate. Warm, some clouds. Went to Russell.*
24. *Worked clearing out the floom in the afternoon. Chopped wood in the afternoon. Warm with some clouds.*
25. *Went and got the planks that belonged to the trunk to the powder mill and fetched them back.*
26. *Was at Russell training.*

OCTOBER, 1827

25. *Run the mill, dried, sorted and packed powder. Washed up and went to Southwick in the evening. Came back and had some difficulty with Tracy and went onto the green carrying my trunk. Stayed all night.*
26. *Went to Southwick. Stayed there for forenoon. Picked appels for Mr. Booth. Cooler.*
27. *Went to Westfield in the forenoon. Met Enos Foote at Horton's in the afternoon. Went to the mill with him and agreed to work for him three weeks if Tracy would be peacible. Clear and pleasant. Went home.*

DECEMBER, 1827

4. *Bound up some rye in the forenoon. Went on to Teco in the afternoon. Cloudy and foggy.*
5. *Carried some rye down to Mr. Sacketts in the forenoon and sent Henry Parke to mill. Went to Lyman Parke's to a bee in the afternoon drawing wood. Warm and cloudy.*
6. *Helped Asher Sackett kill hogs in the forenoon. Went over the river a-hunting in the afternoon. Killed one squirrel. Cloudy.*
7. *Lathed some in the forenoon. Drawed wood in the afternoon for the Widow Hannah Sackett. Cloudy and warm.*
20. *Drawed one long log to the mill in the forenoon. Went to the spell in the afternoon to the widow Phoebe Tuttle's. Cloudy and warm for the season.*
21. *Went out and sawed some. Helped fix the saw. Cold.*
22. *Went to Westfield and to Southwick and got Elizabeth Booth and brought her to Westfield to go to Roland Parke's to teach school. Cool.*
23. *Sunday. Stayed home. Pleasant and cold.*
24. *Worked for Asher Sackett in the tan house fixing the table and covering the vats. Cloudy and cold.*
25. *Cut my hand in the morning very bad. Stayed at home all day. Warmer.*

APRIL, 1828

26. *Saturday morning about 3 o'clock the mills corning works and hot house blew up. The caught fire from the coal mill which caught fire in the night from the coal. Washed up in the forenoon and started for home in the afternoon. Went to Asher Wright's and stayed all night. Cloudy.*
27. *Sunday. Went home. Warm and pleasant.*
28. *Went to Andrew Mallory's mill. Warm. I was very unwell.*
29. *Went to Roland Parke's, Asher Sackett's, and Lyman Parke's. Warm and pleasant. Quite unwell.*
30. *Went to Westfield with Hannah Gowdy. Quite unwell.*

AUGUST, 1828

3. *Went up onto Havetown a-whortle berrying with Isaac C. Davis. Watched with Mr. Stowels sick child at night along with Angeline Winegar. Warm and pleasant.*
4. *Worked in the corning works. Cloudy.*
5. *Cleaned the mill and worked in the corning works some. Clouds.*
8. *Dried and packed powder. Finished work in the mill on account of stock. Warm and pleasant.*
9. *Washed up and attended the funeral of Mr. Stowels child in the forenoon. Moved sixty one kegs of powder from the hot house to the stove house. Warm and pleasant.*
10. *Went to Russell. Very warm.*
12. *Chopped some in the forenoon. Went and drewed a load of boards from Bradley's mill for Asher Sackett. Warm and pleasant.*
15. *Choped some and had a tree fall upon me and hurt my head some. Warm.*

SEPTEMBER, 1828

1. *Went with a complaint to James Bishop's concerning the road. Warm and very dry. Had a very fine shower at night.*
2. *Worked drawing timber for the dam. Cloudy and rainy all day. Warm.*
3. *Stayed about home all day and mended shoes. Rained by showers all day.*
4. *Went to the dam to see if it was a-going off. The river was considerable high, but the dam received but little injury. Rainy.*
5. *Rained very hard all night. Took off the bridge at the meeting house. Friday I went to the meeting house to about the bridge there. Streams very high.*
6. *Worked upon the cider mill and went and helped raise Abel Tuttle's cider press.*
7. *Stayed at home all day. My knee was lame.*
8. *Finished the cider mill. My knee pained me very much.*
9. *My knee was so lame I could scarcely tuch it to the floor. Lay in bed the best part of the day. Cloudy and rained some.*
11. *Stayed about home. Walked a little. My knee was some better. Pleasant.*
16. *Worked on the bridge. Begun to raise a part in the afternoon.*
17. *Finished raising and went home. Took my bee tree. Cloudy and cool.*
18. *Went to Springfield to hear Bushes trial for murdering his wife. Did not get thru.*

DECEMBER, 1828

28. *Went to Southwick to see the powder mill that blew up the 25th owned by Soloman Smith.*
31. *Made a jack to peg shoes in. Cool.*

JANUARY, 1829

1. *Went to Thomas Loomises and then to Pounds in Westfield to a shooting match and back to Thomas Loomises to a ball. Warm and cloudy.*
11. *Sunday. Went to Freeman Powerses to get him to come to play on his violin at the Widow Phoebe Tuttlles on Wednesday evening. Then went to meeting.*
12. *Went to Roger Parkes after sheep. Cool.*
13. *Went to Freeman Powerses again to have him come Tuesday evening on account of the quilting being one day sooner than I expected. Went from there to Westfield to get a grist. Pleasant. Went to Dan Sperry and had quite a dance. The girls went there from the Widow Tuttle's.*

MARCH, 1829

27. *Went to Westfield to mill and agreed to peddle for Russel Treadway \$15.00 a month.*

JUNE, 1829

24. *Went south into the edge of Simsbury, turned to the right round into Granby and stayed at Benjamin Weeds in two miles of Hookam.*
25. *Traveled northwest in Granby towards Granville. Stayed Amasa Holcombs.*
26. *Traveled towards Granville. Went into the edge of Granville and put up at Jephth Rose. Cool and pleasant.*
27. *Went to Thomas Loomises and got my old pewter that I left there Monday and went home. Warmer. Trade dull.*
28. *Went to John A. Mallory's Jr. Rained hard.*
29. *Went to Lee. Rainy and warm.*
30. *Stayed at Lee. Clowdy all day.*

JULY, 1829

1. *Started from Lee and went home. Rained hard all the forenoon. Clowdy in the afternoon.*
2. *Stayed at home in the forenoon. Went to David Palmer's in the afternoon to a ball. Rained very hard a part of the afternoon.*
3. *Stayed at home all day. Rained some.*
4. *Stayed about home all day. Rainy.*

MAY, 1829

21. *Went from Danby across Dorset mountain into Dorset and then took the road for Bennington thro Manchester, Sunderland, Arlington into Shaftsbury and put up at Moses Hulets. Warm.*
22. *Went thro Shaftsbury and Pownel into Williamston. Got my rags. Went about a mile and a half. Put up at Ira Frounds. Warm and pleasant. Trade very dull.*
23. *Traveled thro Adams and into Savoy. Passed a snow drift that was about two feet in the west part of Savoy. Put up at Philip Pierce. Very warm.*
24. *Sunday. Started and went down the stream to Cummington and took the new road thro corner of Chesterfield and a corner of Worthington into Norwich and put up at Russell Gooches. Pleasant and very warm.*
25. *Traveled down to Chester village then down the turnpike home. Traded some. Very warm.*
26. *Sheared sheep in the forenoon. Went up and got some rags that I left at Reuben Palmer's. When I come home a Monday and went to Lyman Parke's 2nd and got Delina Tuttle. Clowdy and rained some.*
27. *Went onto the mountain and played ball at George Williamses in the afternoon. Went to Dan Sperrys in the evening. Election.*
28. *Sorted my rags and fixed my load. Went and cetched some lampen eels. Very warm.*
29. *Went to Westfield and left my rags and got some more tin. Very warm with a very heavy shower of rain and hail, in the afternoon. Went home.*



Drawing by Linda A. Bradley Chicoine

A Hunting Tale from Deer Hill Stories

by Wilbur Starks, Custodian

Seventy-five years ago the two hundred forty acres of Deer Hill State Reservation were largely covered with heavy growths of spruce, hemlock, oak, maple, beech, and ash, each variety growing in tracts by themselves. Butternuts abounded and there were many red beeches that produced large crops of beechnuts. The oaks also were of the variety that yields acorns abundantly. All about the present reservation, too, were tracts of woodland, with many nut-bearing trees, and it was all wonderfully attractive to wildlife. Also Deer Hill was known far and near as a good place to go hunting.

In the northern part of Savoy, fifteen miles away, was a family by the name of Blanchard. Three of the boys, Chandler, Jason, and Levi, were great hunters. Jason later became an Advent minister, but he loved to hunt and greatly enjoyed the sport and also eating the wild meat. In the south part of the same town lived a family by the name of Starks. In this family were five boys and four girls. Two of the boys, Maurice and Albert, were great hands at hunting game of all kinds and also at bee-hunting. In the town of Cummington lived a family by the name of Remington, and the two Remington boys did a lot of fox hunting.

One day in winter, when conditions were just right, Chandler and Jason Blanchard decided to go hunting on Deer Hill, so they got everything ready and with their team of good black horses, Tunker sled, dogs, and lunch, they started long before daylight for Deer Hill. They drove to a

house where lived Frank Holdridge, this being the nearest house to Deer Hill, put the team in the barn, and started on foot for their day's hunting on the hill.

That same morning, very early, Maurice and Albert Starks started to go fox hunting on Still Hill, about seven miles in a straight line from Deer Hill. When the Remington boys got up this same morning, they saw that the snow was just soft enough for good tracking, so as soon as they could get their chores done, they took their fox hound and guns and started for Remington Hill. Remington Hill is a large, heavily wooded tract of country lying on the south side of the north branch of the Westfield River, while Deer Hill lies on the north side of the river, perhaps two miles away. Much of this large tract of woods was then owned by the Remington boys' father, hence its name. It is known by the same name today, and is about as wild a country now as then, but the old growth timber has been cut off, while the old growth on Deer Hill is about as it was except where the forest fires have destroyed it.

Soon after the Starks boys reached Still Hill their dog started a fox and they soon saw that it was a racer — a fox that, after running a short time, strikes off for another hill five or more miles away, makes a few short circles there, then strikes off for another hill, and so on all day, perhaps reaching the hill where it started just at night, and perhaps not going back to it at all that day. This was the kind of fox the dog had started and the boys knew by the sound that he had

started for Deer Hill. After waiting awhile and hearing no more of the dog, they struck out and after a long tiresome hike reached Deer Hill. They got into position to shoot the fox as he came around the circle, but just then heard two shots close together in the direction from which their dog was coming.

"Gosh," said Maurice, "Someone has shot the fox ahead of our dog."

Sure enough, in a few moments their dog stopped barking and the Starks boys started as fast as they could toward where they had heard their dog barking last. Soon they saw him coming, carrying his head and tail low as a good dog will sometimes do when someone besides his master has shot the fox he was running. They called the dog to them and hurried on and saw one of the Remington boys coming with a freshly-shot fox.

"What do you mean, shooting a fox ahead of our dog?" said Maurice.

"What are you hunting over here for?" replied Remington.

"Huh, it's a free country and we can hunt where we're a mind to and besides our dog followed that fox over here and we came after him," said Albert Starks.

"Yes, and I got him and what are you going to do about it?" asked Remington.

"Take it away from you, by gosh, that's what we're going to do" said Starks.

"Not much you won't and you'd better not try it" Remington shouted.

Just then they heard another dog barking, coming toward them fast on a fresh track. The Starks boys and their dog started on a run to get in on this new fox circle. It proved to be that the Remington boys' dog had run his fox off from Remington Hill across the ice on the river and onto the south slope of Deer Hill and was now circling him there and the circles of the two foxes had come close together.

After a short sprint the Starks boys got



Drawing by Kristin Jay

in line of the new circle and had just enough time to get in place when the fox came in sight. Both fired almost at the same time and dropped the fox. With their dog now in the lead they started to get the fox. Just before the Starks dog reached the fox the Remington dog came along the track and up to the dead fox. On seeing the Starks dog about to reach the fox, he at once sprang over the fox ready to fight the Starks dog, which was a right and proper thing for him to do. Of course the Starks dog was bound to get the fox in place of the one which was taken from in front of him and a lively dog fight was on. Albert Starks came up first and started to get the fox before trying to part the dogs. At once the Remington dog grabbed Starks by the right wrist and bit it quite severely. Then the Starks dog got the Remington dog by the throat. At the moment Remington came in sight and yelled, "Take your dog off mine or I'll drop him."

"You drop our dog and I'll drop you" growled Maurice Starks.

It seemed as if there was to be a tragedy right there as all were much excited and in deadly earnest. But at that moment another dog was heard barking loudly as though on a fresh scent and coming fast toward them. All forget their differences for the moment and stood wondering what was coming now. Every man stood with his gun at his shoulder, all forgetting the unwritten hunter's law that no man should shoot game ahead of another man's dog. Even the dogs had forgotten their urge to fight each other and stood listening to the swift and sure approach of that other dog whose baying showed so surely that he was close upon what he was after and that it was no chipmunk or other small game.

Suddenly there bounded into view, not a

fox, but a large buck, antlers laid back, tongue hanging out, eyes wild with fear and despair, a sight to cause pity in the eyes of many, but in these hunters nothing but amazement, as none of them had seen deer hunted with dogs before. Before they could recover from their surprise, the buck had passed out of sight. In a moment shots were heard, and someone called,

"Chan, Chan, I've got him. Come on, come on!"

Then all came to life, dogs and men rushed over to see what had been done, and soon saw Jason Blanchard standing over the still-kicking buck and in his hand the knife with which he had cut its throat.

Jason's brother, Chandler, was coming as fast as he could. "Good boy, Jase, good boy," he said.

"Hey, there," said one of the Remingtons, "I call it kinder low-down to be hunting deer with a dog."

"You bet it is, and now we have seen you do it, you will divvy up with us, won't you?" asked Albert Starks.

"Divvy up nothing," said Chan Blanchard. "What do you think? If my dog starts a deer, you think I'm going to let him run himself to death and I not stop the deer? I guess not. Whatever my dog starts, I get, if I can."

As it was getting towards night and all had had enough excitement for one day and were a long way from home, they all took hold and helped the Blanchards get the buck to where they could get it with their team. Jason was left to watch it, Chandler went for the team, and the rest started for home.

(Editor's note: what became of the foxes?)

Seasonal Gifts

by Deborah Dunne

of Chester

The huge maple tree which grew in front of the house made an impression on me the first time I saw it. It was late summer and the leaves were still green. Its massive trunk rose from the earth with such magnificence that I was compelled to look at it for quite sometime. That tree made me feel at home.

The closing of the house took several months and we were not able to move into it until the day after Thanksgiving. It snowed that day and the tree's fallen leaves were covered by a frosty blanket. That first night I watched the snow as it fell and was caught in its descent on the branches of the tree. Winter had come and the tree was left to withstand the cold without its protective leaves. But its bareness provided me with an imaginative game.

Throughout the winter months that tree was a source of pleasure. Stripped naked as it was I could easily anthropomorphize it. Its huge black trunk was so solidly sunk into the ground that it made me think of the tree as a statement about the winter. It stubbornly refused to move. When the sun shone in the afternoons, reflecting off the snow and blinding the countryside, my tree stood with its arms uplifted as though to relish the warm rays. At night, its forbidding silhouette protected the house from intruders. It did not make rounds as human sentries do but it guarded us just as well.

One morning I awoke to yet another pleasure offered to me by my tree. Along its branches a flock of evening grosbeaks rested. Their vivid golden bodies looked

like blossoms of sunshine scattered upon the black bark. I thanked the tree that day.

Accompanying the snow melt came a practical present from the tree — maple sap. The tree gladly filled the five buckets that were tapped to it. The sap dripped from the tree in a steady rhythm and yielded the sweetest syrup.

After the sugaring, I thought that the tree had exhausted its talents. I was mistaken. In the hot summer months it protects the southern exposure of the house with its leafy umbrella. Some days I lean a ladder against its trunk and climb into the hollow it has created with its branches. From that fifteen foot perch I view the summertime happenings while the tree fans my face with its leaves. I drift into daydreams or think about what it must have been like two hundred years ago when the house was first built and the tree was a sapling. I try to imagine the scenes the tree has witnessed since then and the people it has known. How many others before me partook of its seasonal gifts? Are the holes in its upper trunk from the nails of some boy's treehouse? How many generations of birds chose this tree for the raising of their young? Is that piece of rope around the left branch a relic of a swing? How many times did this tree witness a young girl's first kiss? Did children use its trunk for target practice with snow balls? I can't help thinking about how much this tree has given.

It even looks like a giving tree. A third of the way up its trunk two branches (large enough to be trees themselves) separate themselves and curve upward

and outward toward the sky as though to embrace the world. I now await one last gift from this tree before it renews its cycle. I look with anticipation to the com-

ing of autumn and the kaleidoscopic display of my tree's fall foliage. I can hardly wait.

Drawing by Priscilla McAuslan



Snow

by Linda Billings

of Westfield

*The fresh snow falls quietly to the ground
and on its way
covers everything about it.
The whiteness stands out under the dark sky,
bright and glistening
too soft and faraway to touch.
Silently it stops
leaving the sleeping town
under a coverlet.*



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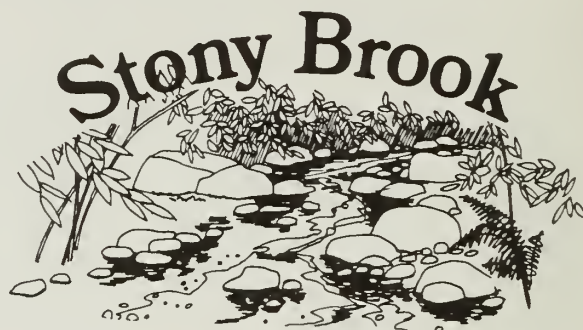
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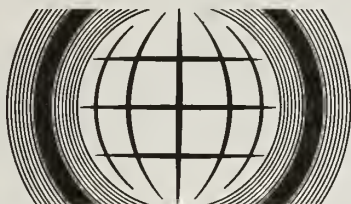
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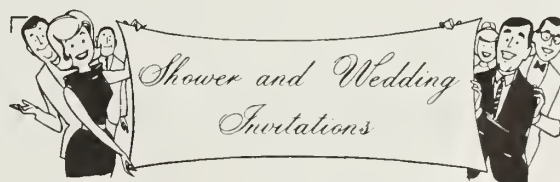
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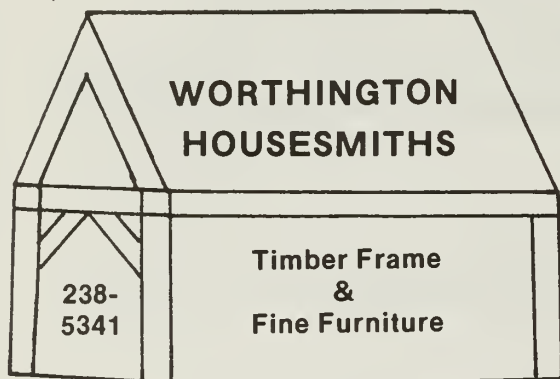
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***“There’s no striving against the stream;
and the weakest still goes to the wall.”***

by Cervantes:
from *Don Quixote*

